

Corispermum pallidum Mosyakin

pale bugseed

Chenopodiaceae (Goosefoot Family)

Status: State Possibly Extirpated

Rank: GHSH

General Description: Adapted from FNA eds. (2004): This annual is branched from the base, 2 to 10 in. (5-25 cm) tall, and covered with branched to star-shaped hairs and minute bumps (especially on the veins of young bracts and upper leaves). Occasionally the plant is almost glabrous, or becoming so at maturity. The leaf blades are narrowly linear, or linear-spatulate, and rarely almost thread-like; they lie flat, or occasionally have slightly rolled-up margins (especially at maturity and in dry plants), and are $\frac{3}{4}$ to 2 in. (2-5 cm) long and 1/16 to 1/8 in. (1-3 mm) wide. The inflorescence arises from the very tips of the flowering stalks, and is loose, with parts open and spreading, or slightly condensed. The flowers are solitary in the axes of leaf-like bracts. The bracts are usually narrowly ovate-lanceolate or lanceolate, and $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (0.5-2 cm) long, by 1/8 in. (2-5 mm) wide. The single (to sometimes 3) perianth segment (tepal) is small, scale like, or occasionally absent. The lens-shaped fruits are pale, slightly shiny or dull, usually straw-colored or yellowish-brown, occasionally with reddish-brown spots, and distinctly broadest beyond the middle, 1/8 in. (2.8-3.8 mm) long and 1/8 in (2.4-3.3 mm) wide. The wings of the fruits are thin, translucent, and irregularly toothed.

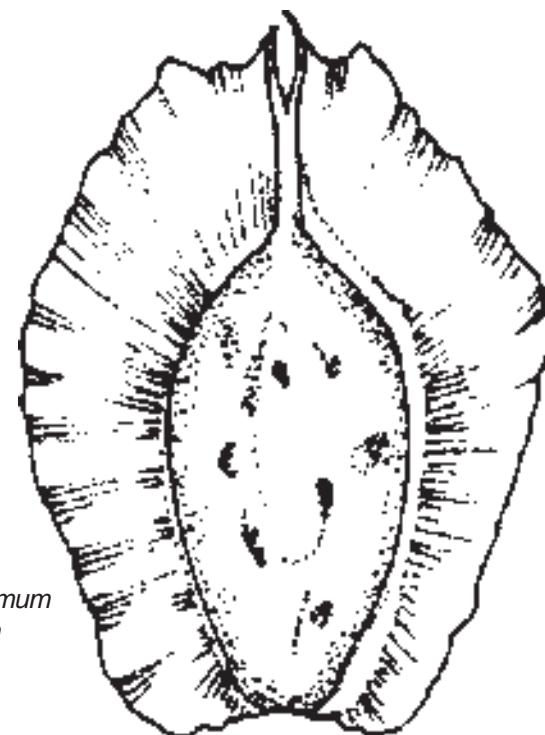
Identification Tips: *Corispermum pallidum* overlaps in range with *C. villosum* and *C. americanum*. Mature fruits are needed for identification. The fruits of *C. pallidum* and *C. americanum* are winged, while the fruits of *C. villosum* are not. The young bracts and upper leaves of *C. pallidum* are covered with branched to star-shaped hairs and minute bumps, while the young bracts and upper leaves of *C. americanum* lack minute bumps. The wings of the fruit of *C. pallidum* are irregularly toothed, while *C. americanum* has fruit with entire wings. The key to *Corispermum* in Flora of North America (2004) should be used for identification. In Hitchcock et al. (1964) this species (along with several others) keys to *C. hyssopifolium* L.

Phenology: *Corispermum pallidum* is identifiable in mid summer to fall. In Washington historical occurrences were identified in June and July.

Range: *Corispermum pallidum* is endemic to Washington's Grant and Douglas counties.

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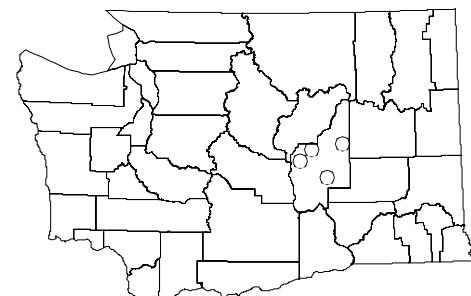
pale bugseed



Fruit of
Corispermum pallidum

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Illustration by Yevonn Wilson-Ramsey

Known distribution
of *Corispermum pallidum*
in Washington



● Current (1980+)

○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Image provided courtesy of the New York Botanical Garden Virtual Herbarium

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Habitat: Historical occurrences were found on sandy sagebrush plains in drifting sand and dry sand. The elevation ranges were from 984 to 1312 feet (300-400 m). One collection occurred with bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*) and Indian ricegrass (*Oryzopsis hymenoides*). One collection was from near Crab Creek.

Ecology: This species appears to be nearly restricted to the sand deposits of the Quincy Basin in Grant County.

State Status Comments: The taxon is known from four historical occurrences in Grant and Douglas counties from 1893 to 1953. Currently there are no known extant populations.

Inventory Needs: Historical sites should be revisited for updated population information. Sandy areas and riparian areas in Grant and Douglas counties should be systematically surveyed for possible individuals.

Threats and Management Concerns: Most of the historic habitat has been converted to irrigated agriculture. Remaining sandy areas are mostly privately owned and/or heavily used by ORVs.

Comments: In Hitchcock et al. (1964) this species (along with several others) keys to *C. hyssopifolium* L.

References:

Flora of North America Editorial Committee, eds. 2004. *Flora of North America North of Mexico Volume 4 Magnoliophyta Caryophyllidae part 1*. Oxford University Press, New York. 584 pp.

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1964. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 2: Salicaceae to Saxifragaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 597 pp.

Mosyakin, S.L. 1995. New taxa of *Corispermum* L. (Chenopodiaceae), with preliminary comments on the taxonomy of the genus in North America. *Novon* 5:340-353.